



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Adult Education Directors
Federally Funded Grantees
Cooperating Eligible Entities

FROM: The Adult Education Unit
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: March 20, 2020

SUBJECT: Adult Education Operational Memorandum #03-20

- General Guidelines for all Connecticut Adult Education Programs
- WIFI Options for Students
- Credit Diploma Requirements
- GED Testing
- GED Student Options
- GED Teacher Professional Learning Options
- NEDP Guidelines
- ABE and ESL

General Guidelines for Adult Education Programs

The CSDE is aware that these are challenging times for education in general, and especially for Adult Education Programs. The work of adult education will look different no matter what role we serve, and for the remainder of the 2019-20 educational year, it will likely involve working remotely.

State and Federal grants have been awarded for fiscal year 2020, and we are working on final calculations for FY20 for the State Adult Education Grant. As adult education services are funded through June 30, 2020, programs are able to deliver services through distance learning by whatever means possible throughout the period of school closure and to pay staff as appropriate. Within public health recommendations and guidelines, staff paid through State or Federal funding should continue to work and be paid for their work during this time.

We urge you to focus both on building capacity for distance education and finding ways to provide services to your ABE/GED and ESL students as soon as your program is prepared to offer it. CDP students may continue work that is already in progress. Please see details below specific to CDP.

In an effort to provide consistent guidance, we are stating the following:

1. Registrations for current and future classes may not take place until further notice.
2. Due to the inability of staff and students to be present on school property and the suspension of all 'in-person' activities, any and all educational activities should be conducted via electronic means.
3. If your district has a current policy regarding students' ability to take home technology, adult education programs may provide laptops, tablets or Chromebooks using the same protocols.

4. If you have the ability to access paper assignments to provide to students, and can provide a “drop off” location in concert with district policy, assignments may be distributed and collected in that manner.
5. Teachers can access class lists and contact information (such as email addresses) via CARS, or can use already established means to contact students. CARS Data Administrators have access to the entire list of email addresses in an Excel format through the Data Downloads Reports: “Student” file. (Be sure to filter the file by school year 2020.)
6. Programs are encouraged to provide information regarding free resources that ABE, GED and ESL students can utilize to maintain learning until classes resume.
7. Credit Diploma students must still meet the 48 hour minimum, but may do so via electronic means as outlined in the section on Credit Diploma.
8. Programs are not permitted to do any CASAS testing remotely. A proctor must be physically present to administer all CASAS tests. Agencies will have to wait to test students until students are able to physically return to classes.

WIFI Options for Students

The companies below are offering WIFI service to students without connectivity in the home, which should alleviate equity issues:

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Comcast | Low income or free internet provision | https://www.internetessentials.com/covid19 |
| Charter Communications | Free Spectrum broadband and Wi-Fi access to homes with K-12 and/or college students who do not already have a subscription | https://corporate.charter.com/newsroom/charter-to-offer-free-access-to-spectrum-broadband-and-wifi-for-60-days-for-new-K12-and-college-student-households-and-more |
| AT&T | Qualifying low income households can apply for \$10 a month internet access through the Access from AT&T program. | https://about.att.com/pages/COVID-19.html |
| Verizon | Response and offers (scroll down) | https://www.verizon.com/about/news/our-response-coronavirus |
| T-Mobile | Response and offers | https://www.t-mobile.com/brand/ongoing-updates-covid-19 |
| Sprint | Response (may need to open individual updates to see offers) | https://newsroom.sprint.com/covid-19-updates-sprint-responds.htm |
| Xfinity | Response and supports | https://www.xfinity.com/prepare |

Credit Diploma Requirements

While it is our goal to mitigate the effect of the closings due to COVID19, the overarching responsibility is to engage students in meaningful educational activities that will enable them to move forward to postsecondary or career opportunities. While we are unable to reduce the hours per credit below the 48 as stated in statute, we are providing flexibility in how those hours can be met in lieu of seat time.

The following guidelines are offered to enable students who are already enrolled in a credit-bearing course and wish to complete the course requirements for credit:

1. Students may submit assignments electronically via email, Google Docs or other electronic means provided by districts. Federal guidelines permit the use of “teacher judgement” in setting the amount of time in hours that an assignment should reasonably take to properly complete. Attendance may be counted based on that determination for properly completed and submitted work.
2. Directors should work with teachers to determine the number of paid teacher hours required to provide and correct assignments, and the number of hours that may be earned for each completed and submitted project.
3. Students who are currently enrolled in CTVHS courses or approved programs that capture time such as Edgenuity may continue to complete work and are exempt from completing the 12 hours of seat time.

GED Testing

All GED test centers throughout Connecticut are closed temporarily during this unprecedented outbreak and will resume once schools are back in session.

The COVID-19 impact is presenting Pearson VUE with extraordinary challenges in providing a safe working and testing environment for their employees and candidates. In addition, many test centers have started to run into difficulty supplying them with the necessary hygienic items, such as hand sanitizer, disinfectant, and tissues.

The decision was grounded in the belief that we have a responsibility to keep our candidates, employees, and communities healthy and safe amidst this unprecedented uncertainty.

Pearson VUE will be updating their Coronavirus Page daily. <https://home.pearsonvue.com/coronavirus-update>
If you are a GED Test Center, please check that webpage for any changes or additions to policies.

GED Student Options

As classroom learning shifts online temporarily, GED Testing Service has tools available to help maintain a consistent level of student engagement. There are free teaching resources available at GED.com by clicking on Educators and Administrators.

Students are encouraged to log into their GED.com accounts and take GED Ready practice tests to get an Enhanced Score Report. The report will provide students a detailed report identifying their strengths as well as their areas of weakness, which they can begin to study. The Enhanced Score Report can be found under the “My Scores” section that includes four parts:

- My Scores
- How I Can Score Higher (Personal Study Plan)
- What My Score Means
- My Written Answers

GED Teacher Professional Learning Options

There are also opportunities for teachers to continue professional development virtually. GEDTS offers free webinars for educators as part of the Tuesdays for Teachers program. There are great ideas for lessons and teachers can access all previous webinars and resources here:

https://ged.com/educators_admins/teaching/professional_development/webinars/

Some resources have been shared in the [Schology](#) groups. Be sure to remind teachers to utilize the information and share any additional resources that may help other teachers who are struggling.

[GED Play](#) is a new, instructional video program designed by Kaplan and delivered by Aztec Software. It is a library of on-demand video lessons to enhance student performance on key skills measured on the GED test. It is a classroom supplement to keep students engaged in their GED prep.

[GED Flash](#) was developed in partnership with Aztec Software and offers thousands of practice questions for all four GED test subjects with detailed reporting through the educator dashboard. Adult Education Providers may purchase the GED Flash program, which allows students to quickly review concepts in Reading Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. Students receive 10 questions on each attempt, and receive immediate feedback on their responses. This is a great study aid when preparing for the GED Tests, and a quick refresher of concepts often needed prior to taking the assessment.

NEDP

CASAS has announced the following:

NEDP will grant the following exception to regular NEDP practice for the foreseeable future:

- a. If client has completed and submitted a competency area, but it is not possible to hold the IOC, the Assessor may open additional competency areas so that client can continue to work forward. In addition;
- b. NEDP Assessors may evaluate and release results for submitted activities without conducting In-Office Checks. In-Office Checks will be completed when agencies reopen and distancing restrictions have eased.

To clarify the guidance that CASAS has sent, CT NEDP will proceed in the following manner.

1. NEDP clients can continue to work at home on the competency area and adhere to the two week rule for submission. Clients should submit whatever work they have been able to accomplish on each competency by the end of the two week time period.
2. The advisor/assessor then evaluates the work that is submitted and gives feedback as PTA on that work to the client. All work that was not completed should be marked “incomplete” and “ND.”
3. An In Office Check will not be done until there is an opportunity for a face to face visit.
4. Another competency area is not opened until the current competency area is completed, minus the IOC, and closed.
5. Do not have multiple competency areas open at the same time as this may cause confusion and overwhelm the client.

As always, teachers, advisors/assessors should be paid for the work they are doing with the client, even when off premises. How hours are accounted for teachers is a local matter. Please note state and federal funding have been released for these purposes.

ABE and ESL Options for Students

Although there are no hourly requirements for ABE and ESL classes, programs are encouraged to continue to provide resources and activities as staff availability allows.

1. Web sites and activities that teachers have prepared for students can be shared through the program's social media presence.
2. Consider making use of the many appropriate, adult learner-focused websites that have been shared this week by SDE.
3. Encourage students to take advantage of the free internet access which is cited above, and post links to those resources on your webpage, Twitter, Facebook or other social media presence.
4. If teachers are working with a group of students, suggest a means of keeping track of the activities taking place.
5. Provide paid hours for teachers to assist in gathering and providing appropriate websites and materials for their classes.